

AGENDA ITEM VII A

REQUEST TO OFFER EXISTING ACADEMIC PROGRAMS THROUGH DISTANCE LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES

SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA UNIVERSITY

B.A. IN COMMUNICATIONS – ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS CONCENTRATION

STAFF COMMENT

Academic Affairs Policies and Procedures Section 2.12 - Delivery of Academic Programs Through Distance Learning Technologies requires state colleges and universities that propose to offer more than 50% of an existing degree program through distance learning technologies to first seek Board of Regents' approval before submitting a request for authorization through the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

The policy states that the following planning and quality issues must be satisfactorily addressed: appropriateness to role, scope and mission; lack of unnecessary program duplication; consistency with the Desegregation Settlement Agreement; funding provisions of Academic Affairs Policy 2.4 (Letters of Intent); adequacy of infrastructure and resources; consistency of program design with that offered on campus; and appropriateness of the curricular format.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Planning Issues

This program is appropriate to the role, scope, and mission of the University. Program duplication is not a relevant issue; no other state university offers this particular concentration. The program will be offered throughout the University's service area and National Guard Armories statewide. The Desegregation Settlement Agreement does not make any provisions for the development of any similar and/or related programs at the state's predominantly black institutions of higher education. No additional state funding will be required to offer the program electronically.

Quality Issues

This program's design replicates the program already offered on campus. 75% of courses required for this B.A. degree will be offered through electronic media (internet and compressed video). Adequate infrastructure is available on campus to offer these courses electronically. With regard to faculty expertise, the institution reported that faculty receive adequate training through Southeastern's Center for Faculty Excellence, which offers workshops throughout the semester on the use of distance learning for course delivery and enhancement. Ongoing support is provided by the Center as well.

STAFF SUMMARY

Southeastern Louisiana University has successfully addressed requirements of Academic Affairs Policy 2.12. The staff, therefore, recommends approval of this request.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee grant approval for the request from Southeastern Louisiana University to seek authorization from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to offer the Bachelor of Arts in Communications - Organizational Communication Concentration via distance learning technologies.